

# Abramoff Plea Dooms DeLay, Speeds Sinking of Cheney-Bush

by Anton Chaitkin

Jack Abramoff pleaded guilty to conspiracy, mail fraud, and income tax evasion, in two agreements with federal prosecutors Jan. 3 and 4. To lessen a potential 30-year prison sentence, he must fully cooperate in the growing criminal probe of that “K Street” Congressional and lobbying apparatus created by Tom DeLay and increasingly run by Vice President Dick Cheney.

Even the narrow set of facts referenced in the Abramoff plea bargain points directly to the broader underlying reality, that DeLay and Abramoff together forged Abramoff’s crime empire. The SunCruz case alone makes this brutally clear (see below).

The *EIR* exposé of the Cheney-DeLay axis in our Dec. 30, 2005 story, “Cheney and Delay, Joined at the Hip,” is only a first glimpse of the slime tangle enveloping the Administration from the DeLay-Abramoff sewer.

The earlier (Nov. 17, 2005) plea bargain by Abramoff’s criminal partner, Michael Scanlon, helped force Abramoff into his own guilty plea in the first week of the new year.

Their partnership began in the late 1990s while Scanlon was Tom DeLay’s communications director and spokesman. By 2000-2001 Scanlon had left DeLay’s staff and had become Abramoff’s secret lobbying partner. Abramoff was running all their now-famous scams from the Washington office of the Greenberg Traurig law firm. This “Team Abramoff” was an action arm of the K Street lobbying complex created for DeLay by Abramoff and his cohorts Grover Norquist, Ralph Reed, and DeLay Chief of Staff Ed Buckham.

## The Pirate Ship Sails

The Bush-Cheney Administration came into office with Jack Abramoff as an advisor to the Interior Department on the Cheney-led transition team, and as a Bush-Cheney “Pioneer” fundraiser. The DeLay machine gave the Cheney cabal power over Congress. All hands now joined in a mad scramble for loot through such adventures as Enron, Halliburton, gambling casinos on- and off-shore, and the deregulated global pyramid of financial derivatives and hedge funds.

Take, for example, the unsavory case of former Deputy Interior Secretary J. Steven Griles, an asset of both the Cheney and the DeLay-Abramoff sides of the apparatus.

A federal task force is now probing how Griles ran errands inside the Interior Department for the Abramoff and Norquist

Indian casino scams. But Griles simultaneously helped manage the policy-making for Vice President Cheney’s notorious, still secret, Energy Task Force. And Griles, while he was the number two official in the Interior Department, continued taking his salary as a lobbyist for the anti-regulatory coal mining companies—an industry turned more murderous by the plunder policies of the financiers sponsoring the present regime.

Griles is currently the partner of Halliburton lobbyist Joseph Allbaugh and of former Dick Cheney advisor Andrew Lundquist, in a lobbying firm plugged into the DeLay “K Street” informal government apparatus. This K Street apparatus has recently been co-managed by Dick Cheney, who has more or less lived on Capitol Hill, and by Rep. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), DeLay’s underling and his temporary replacement as Majority leader since DeLay’s indictment.

## Murder in the Laundry

Jack Abramoff’s second guilty plea (Jan. 4) involved his fraudulent takeover of the SunCruz casino cruise line. The Broward County (Fort Lauderdale) State’s Attorney’s office is prosecuting, in a separate case under Florida state law, the gangland-style murder of former SunCruz owner Konstantinos “Gus” Boulis.

A source close to the murder prosecution has told *EIR* that investigators are looking closely at the angle of money laundering. The source said prosecutors have gotten from a former SunCruz chief financial officer, a conservative estimate that “tens of millions of dollars cash per month” went through the SunCruz casino boats.

The source said the ability to launder large sums through such a cash-only business, offshore away from regulators and law enforcement, would be a prime motivation for taking control of the enterprise, and for hiring people like the Mafia-connected Anthony Moscattiello to accomplish such money laundering. After Jack Abramoff and his partners took over SunCruz, Moscattiello was paid as a company consultant. Moscattiello and two of his associates have been arrested and charged as trigger-men in the Gus Boulis murder.

The source told *EIR* that Boulis was actively seeking to take back control of the company when he was killed, and had gotten backers to put up the \$60 million necessary to repay Foothill Capital the amount they loaned to Abramoff

to buy SunCruz. (Abramoff has pleaded guilty to defrauding Foothill for the \$60 million loan.)

The source said the prosecutors are looking at Abramoff and his partner Adam Kidan, to see which of the two might convincingly implicate the other as the main architect of the Boulis murder.

Note that Bush-Cheney fundraiser Jack Abramoff had control over that flood of unregulated and untraceable cash washing through SunCruz; it was based out of Florida, the state governed by the incoming President's brother Jeb Bush, the state of the famous 2000 election chicanery, the state wherein the Bush-Cheney ticket was directly supervised by Abramoff's partner in dirty money-conduits, Ralph Reed.

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## Chronology

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### Abramoff's SunCruz Caper

Below is a timeline for Abramoff's SunCruz adventure. It displays the deeper reality of the "DeLay, Inc." apparatus in action, beyond the crooked mutual favors between DeLay and Abramoff that are being played up in the mass media.

**February 2000:** Abramoff negotiated with Gus Boulis to buy his SunCruz line of 11 ocean-going gambling casino boats.

**May 2000:** Abramoff flew Tom DeLay and DeLay's deputy chief of staff Tony Rudy on a 10-day golfing trip to Scotland.

**June 9, 2000:** Boulis got from the DeLay office a flag that had flown over the U.S. Capitol.

**June 15, 2000:** Abramoff, Kidan, DeLay's Tony Rudy, and SunCruz personnel flew on a SunCruz jet to California for a golf tournament. Boulis agreed a week later to sell SunCruz to Abramoff and Kidan, while keeping a 10% stake in the company.

**Sept. 18, 2000:** Greg Walker of Foothill Capital Corp. met Tom DeLay in Abramoff's Skybox at a Washington Redskins football game.

**Sept. 26, 2000:** Abramoff and Kidan got a \$60 million loan from Foothill Capital, with DeLay's Tony Rudy serving as a reference for the loan.

**Oct. 26, 2000:** Rep. Robert Ney (R-Ohio), praised Kidan and attacked Boulis in the Congressional Record, using a script written by former DeLay spokesman Scanlon. DeLay would soon sponsor Ney to become chairman of the House Administration Committee.

**November 2000:** The Presidential election and recount in Florida was marred by irregularities including intimidation riots staged by Republicans. Four men known later as Abra-

moff subordinates, Shawn Vasell, Duane Gibson, Todd Boulanger, and Tony Rudy, participated in the ground-level Republican action in Florida.

**December 2000:** Gus Boulis protested being defrauded by Abramoff and Kidan, and worked to get back in control of SunCruz. Abramoff-Kidan e-mails show they had begun planning to remove Boulis from the picture.

**December 2000 (and again in April, 2001):** Kidan and other SunCruz representatives were in Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, to work out plans to move some of their operations there. That Pacific territory was virtually governed by Jack Abramoff, the official representative of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, and of the garment manufacturers there, and by Tom DeLay, who as dictator of the U.S. House of Representatives, defeated attempts to raise the islands' labor standards above those of slavery, while he and his staff shared in the millions Abramoff was paid to achieve that end.

**Dec. 13, 2000:** SunCruz began paying a total of \$145,000 to reputed Gambino-crime-family associate Anthony Moscatiello, and to his daughter, for "consulting" and "catering."

**Early in 2001 (no later than March):** Tony Rudy left DeLay's staff to join Abramoff at Greenberg Traurig.

**Jan. 19, 2001:** Gus Boulis filed for court action to force payment from Kidan/Abramoff and to block their control of SunCruz.

**Jan. 20, 2001:** Kidan and Scanlon attended the gathering in Tom DeLay's office celebrating the Inauguration of President Bush and Vice President Cheney.

**Jan. 28, 2001:** Abramoff flew Tom DeLay's aide, Tim Berry, to Florida on a SunCruz jet, to go gambling on a SunCruz floating casino. Abramoff at that time was paying himself a \$500,000 SunCruz salary.

**Feb. 6, 2001:** Gus Boulis was shot to death on a Fort Lauderdale street.

**March 15, 2001:** Abramoff, Kidan and three other SunCruz executives each donated \$1,000 to Rep. Ney at a Ney fundraising event at a Washington basketball game.

Since these events, DeLay, Abramoff, Moscatiello, Scanlon, Kidan—and Dick Cheney's chief of staff, Lewis Libby—have all been indicted. Grand juries and prosecutorial task forces are in action, pressing in on the Cheney-DeLay axis, closing in on perhaps 60 or more Congressmen and other Federal officials and lobbyists. President George W. Bush, Tom DeLay, and Roy Blunt have each announced they are giving away to charity some of the money they got from Jack Abramoff; but it would appear to be too late.

Abramoff's Jan. 3 plea agreement includes the statement, "Nothing in this agreement is intended to provide any limitation of liability arising out of any acts of violence." This clause leaves open the possibility that Abramoff might be charged with the murder of Gus Boulis—an added incentive for his vigorous cooperation with the prosecutorial forces now aimed at his criminal partners.